

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. (Original) A surgical instrument comprising:  
a body portion;  
a tool member supported on the distal end of the body portion; and  
an elongated cover supported on the instrument in a first position wherein the tool member is uncovered, the cover being movable from the first position to a second position at least partially encompassing the tool member.
2. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 1, wherein the cover is liquid impermeable.
3. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~Claims 1 or 2~~ Claim 2, wherein a portion of the cover is fastened to the instrument.
4. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~Claims 1, 2 or 3~~ Claim 3, wherein the cover is tubular and has a proximal and a distal end and wherein the cover is open at the proximal and distal ends.
5. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ Claim 4, further including a cover deployment device operably associated with the cover, the cover deployment device being movable to move the cover from the first position to the second position.
6. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 5, wherein the cover deployment device includes a sleeve slidably positioned about the body portion between a retracted and an advanced position, the sleeve being slidable from the retracted position to the advanced position to move the cover from the first position to the second position.

7. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 6, wherein the sleeve includes first and second half-sections, the first and second half-sections being normally held in abutment with one another by at least one expandable member, the expandable member being expandable to permit the first and second half-sections to move outwardly with respect to each other.

8. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 7, wherein the expandable member is a resilient O-ring.

9. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~Claims 6 or 7~~ Claim 7, wherein the sleeve includes a proximally located annular ring dimensioned to facilitate movement of the sleeve between the retracted and advanced positions.

10. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of Claims 7-9~~ Claim 9, wherein the first sleeve half-section includes at least one projection and the second sleeve half-section includes at least one slot, the at least one projection being slidable into the at least one slot to maintain alignment between the first and second half-sections when the half-sections move outwardly with respect to each other.

11. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of Claims 6-10~~ Claim 10, wherein the cover includes a proximal end and a distal end and defines a lumen, the distal end of the cover being fastened to the surgical instrument on or adjacent the tool member such that the cover lumen is positioned about the body portion and the cover deployment device, wherein movement of the cover deployment device from the retracted position to the advanced position inverts the cover.

12. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of Claims 6-11~~ Claim 11, wherein the cover deployment device includes a distal engagement member, a proximal guide portion and a central body portion interconnecting the engagement member and the guide

portion, the cover deployment device being slidably supported on the body portion to enable the cover deployment device to be moved to move the cover to the second position.

13. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ Claim 12, wherein the cover includes a tubular member defining a lumen, one end of the cover being fastened to the instrument, the other end of the cover being movable over the tool member to at least partially encompass the tool assembly.

14. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 13, further including a closure device for closing the other end of the cover after it has moved over the tool member.

15. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 14, wherein the closure device includes an elastic band supported by the cover.

16. (Original) A surgical instrument according to Claim 14, wherein the closure device includes a drawstring.

17. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of the preceding~~ Claim 16, wherein the distal end of the cover is removably fastened to the surgical instrument.

18. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of the preceding~~ Claim 17, wherein the surgical instrument is a circular stapler.

19. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of Claims 1-17~~ Claim 17, wherein the surgical instrument is an ultrasonic dissector.

20. (Amended) A surgical instrument according to ~~any of Claims 1-17~~ Claim 17, wherein surgical instrument is a linear stapler.

21. (Original) A method of performing a surgical procedure comprising the following steps:

providing a surgical instrument including a body portion, a tool member and a cover, the cover being supported on the instrument and movable from a first position wherein the

tool assembly is uncovered to a second position wherein the tool member is at least partially covered;

positioning the surgical instrument adjacent a surgical site and performing a surgical operation on desired tissue;

moving the cover from the first position to the second position; and

subsequently removing the surgical instrument from the surgical site.

22. (Original) A method according to Claim 21, wherein the surgical instrument is an circular stapler.

23. (Original) A method according to Claim 15, wherein the surgical instrument is a linear stapler.

24. (Original) A method according to Claim 15, wherein the surgical instrument is an ultrasonic dissector.

25. (Original) A method according to Claim 21, wherein the surgical instrument includes a closure device, and further including the step of actuating the closure device to close the cover at a location distally of the tool member.

26. (Original) A method according to Claim 25, wherein the closure device is a drawstring.